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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/922,453	08/03/2001	Shridhar P. Joshi	47079-00064USP1	1760

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EXAMINER

CAPRON, AARON J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3714

DATE MAILED: 04/21/2003

3

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/922,453

Applicant(s)

JOSHI ET AL.

Examiner

Aaron J. Capron

Art Unit

3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 17-21 and 24-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 17-21 and 24-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2-3, 5. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of Group III in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that Group I is similar to Group III with respect to dependent claim 20 in that both refer to altering the display based upon the number of wager inputs and that Group II is similar to Group III in that both are based on use of the game machine. With respect to the argument for Groups I and III, the Examiner finds the Applicants' argument persuasive. With respect to the argument for Groups II and III, the Examiner finds the Applicants' argument non-persuasive because Group II is based on changing the display based on the frequency of inputs while Group III is directed to changing the display based upon other triggering events.

Claims 9-16 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected Group II, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in Paper No. 7.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Art Unit: 3714

Claims 1-8, 17-21 and 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Acres (U.S. Patent No. 6,254,483; hereafter "Acres").

Referring to claim 1, Acres discloses a method of operating a gaming machine, comprising monitoring a number of wager inputs from players of the gaming machine (6:44-50); and altering a visual motif of the gaming machine in response to the number being a certain value (abstract, 1:61-65 and 3:15-20).

Referring to claim 2, Acres discloses includes monitoring wager inputs over a period of time (6:14-19) and while a variety of different visual motifs are being displayed, and determining which of the variety of different visual motifs is a favorite motif, the favorite motif having a largest number of wager inputs as compared to other ones of the variety of visual different visual, the certain value is the number of wager inputs, the altering includes displaying the motif on the machine (6:14-29).

Referring to claims 3-4, Acres discloses the certain value is a predetermined value such that the step of altering occurs at any predetermined frequency (3:16-20 and 6:13-50).

Referring to claim 5, Acres discloses the step of altering background elements (abstract, 1:61-65 and 3:15-20).

Referring to claims 6-8, Acres discloses the background visual elements include a series of cyclical motifs; the step of altering includes consecutively switching between ones of the series of cyclical motifs (Figures 4 and 5). The time variables can relate to a specific time of the day, the week or the year (6:20-29).

Referring to claim 17, Acres discloses a method of operating a gaming machine, comprising storing a plurality of data sets for producing a plurality of different types of visual

Art Unit: 3714

motifs on a display of the gaming machine (6:4-12); displaying a first visual motif on a display, discontinuing the first visual motif and displaying a second visual motif on the display based upon use of the gaming machine (abstract and 6:13-62).

Referring to claims 18-19, Acres discloses sequentially displaying additional different types of visual motifs (Figures 4 and 5).

Referring to claim 20, Acres discloses the step of displaying the second one occurs after a predetermined number of plays by the players (6:40-50)

Referring to claim 21, Acres discloses the step of displaying the second one occurs after determining a favorite visual motif of a variety of visual motifs to be displayed by monitoring inputs from the players (6:14-19).

Claims 24-26 correspond in scope to a gaming machine set forth for use of the method listed in the claims above and are encompassed by use as set forth in the rejection above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron J. Capron whose telephone number is (703) 305-3520.


The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Hughes can be reached on (703) 308-1806. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 872-9303 for After Final communications.

Art Unit: 3714

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

ajc
April 16, 2003


S. THOMAS HUGHES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700